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School Committee Minutes 06/22/2010

Approved by School Committee September 28, 2010

**THE ARLINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, JUNE 22, 2010
7:30 P.M.**

Present:

Mr. Joseph Curro, Chair, Ms. Leba Heigham, Vice Chair, Ms. Cindy Starks, Secretary, Mr. Joseph Curran, Dr. Kirsi Allison-Ampe and Mr. Judson Pierce.

Dr. Kathleen Bodie, Superintendent, Dr. Wallis Raemer, Interim Assistant Superintendent, Mr. Mark Ryder Director of Special Education Ms. Diane Johnson, Chief Financial Officer, and Ms. Karen Fitzgerald, Administrative Assistant.

Absent:

Mr. Jeff Thielman

Mr. Steve Pereira, AAA Representative, Student Representatives

Ms. Johnson exited the meeting at 8:54 p.m. and returned at 9:05 p.m.

Mr. Curran exited the meeting at 8:39 p.m. and returned at 8:42 p.m.

Ms. Johnson exited 10:40 p.m. and returned 10:42 p.m.

Mr. Curran exited the meeting 10:42 and returned 10:44 p.m.

Reflection, Remembrance, and Recognition

Mr. Curro and Dr. Ampe read a made up bedtime story, which the School Committee members donated as an online auction bid for The Bridge the Gap Campaign.

The Arlington High School Varsity Cheerleading Team led by Co-Captains Seniors Kayla Fitzgerald and Shannon Palmer spoke on the team being selected to participate in this year's 2011 Gator Bowl Event in Jacksonville, Florida.

The team began fundraising efforts to raise the \$25,000 needed to help the cheerleaders get to the Gator Bowl event.

The cheerleaders expressed their concerns on the FY 11 Athletic Fees set for next year and addressed the additional cost of cheerleading for choreography, music and uniforms fees families have to endure above and beyond the athletic fee.

Arlington FY 11 Bridge the Gap Update

The Steering Committee from the Arlington Education Foundation and The Arlington FY 11 Bridge the Gap Campaign forwarded the first check to Mr. Curro in the amount of \$483,000, which Ms. Johnson, Chief Financial Officer received to support the FY 11 Add-Backs to the Arlington Public Schools. The extension of the campaign for one-week had raised an additional \$86,000 in donations, and continue accepting donations until July. Mr. Curro presented a Certificate of Appreciation to each member of the Steering Committee: Mary Ellen Aronow, Juli Brazile, Barbara Dumery, Michelle Farrington, Danuta Forbes, Kathryn Gandek-Tighe, Kimberly Kapner, Jennifer Lewis-Forbes, Jennifer Melcher, Marie Meteer, and Amy Speare.

Public Participation

Ms. Nancy Lowe requested to keep the four additional priorities the School Committee voted on: Physical Education at the Elementary schools, Math Support, Guidance Counselor at Ottoson Middle School, and the Reduction of Athletic Fees at Arlington High School for the next priority funding to the FY Add-back and suggested keeping the Library positions too.

Mr. Michael Carta would like the School Committee to reconsider the eliminations of the Library/Media Center positions both at the middle school and high school. He informed the committee that the New England NESCC requires accredited high schools to have a full time Library/Media Specialist and Arlington Public Schools will be given a warning due to this violation regulation.

Ms. Edie Barrett, parent of middle school student would like to maintain the Ottoson Middle School Guidance position.

Ms. Maria Schwartz urged the School Committee members to recognize the importance of the middle school guidance counselor and to review the Massachusetts Goals as well as Arlington Public Schools goals to ensure that all Arlington students are well prepared for academic, social, emotional, physical and vocational success in the 21st century.

Professional Development Update

Dr. Wallis Raemer, Interim Assistant Superintendent, Jenn Pierce, Marsha Mann, Frances Brandt and Deb D'Amico, Elementary Collaborative team, Lindsay Hubbard and Carol Feeney, Middle School Collaborative and high school team member; Meg Lim presented the high school Professional Development presentation on Collaborative Learning Teams. Teachers meet and worked together to study lessons, assessments and shared data among each other to improve teaching and learning for all students in the district.

Pledge of Allegiance Request

Arlington High School student, Mr. Sean Harrington had come to ask the School Committee members to support his cause of having every public school in Arlington recite or listen to a recording of the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Harrington had received many signatures and letters supporting his petition (although none were presented to the school committee) and said that he will continue this cause until his goal is met.

Mr. Curran had moved to put the Pledge of Allegiance back into the Arlington Public Schools, seconded by Ms. Heigham.

The School Committee members support the spirit of Mr. Harrington's request and said the School Committee cannot mandate any employees to recite the Pledge of Allegiance. Ms. Juliana Rice, Town Counsel had sent a letter to Ms. Denise Burns, former Chair, Arlington School Committee and Dr. Kathleen Bodie, Superintendent of Schools, January 6, 2009, with her opinion of the General Law c. 71, s 69, requiring recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance is constitutionally invalid.

After the discussion, Mr. Curran rescinded his original motion and made the following motion:

Mr. Curran moved that the Pledge of Allegiance be said in some fashion - by recording or by a willing participant everyday in the Arlington Public Schools, seconded by Ms. Heigham.

Roll Call: Mr. Pierce No, Dr. Ampe No, Mr. Curran Yes, Ms. Starks Yes, Ms. Heigham No, Mr. Curro Yes.

Voted: 3-3 motion failed

After the motion failed Mr. Harrington pleaded with the School Committee to reconsider this motion.

Music and Art Curriculum Presentation

Mr. Pat Tassone, Interim Part time Music Director and Mr. David Ardito, Interim Part time Visual Art Director reported on the progress of the Music and Art Department over the past year. Both directors recognized the students' awards and staff accomplishments during the past school year. It was noted various community Visual Art exhibits for staff and students were held at Town Hall and at the Arlington Center for the Arts as well as a mural just installed at the Arlington Senior Center. Mr. Tassone highlighted the Performing Arts Activities for the year, the following is a small portion of these activities: Town Day performances, auditions for middle school ensembles, and auditions for the fall play at the high school, fundraiser performances, concerts at each school, at each play, and at the Robbins Library.

The committee appreciated the work of the staff and students in both the Visual Arts and Performing Arts Departments. It was suggested to have the Visual Arts and Performing Arts Curriculum included in the presentation.

Recess 10:52 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.

ACMI Presentation

Mr. Norm Macleod, Executive Director, Mr. Jeff Munroe, Studio Manager, and J.R. Curtis, Education and Government Access Coordinator of Arlington Community Media, Inc. (ACMI) encouraged the School Committee, Administrative Team, teachers and students to become an ACMI member and volunteer to learn how to use the equipment to enhance the public relations of good things that occur daily during the school day / school year.

Mr. Macleod stated that some students from the Ottoson Middle School and Arlington High Schools have already been trained by attending workshops. The students have been involved at shooting many events around town such as, Governor Patrick's visit to Arlington High School, various sporting events and Arlington High School Graduation.

Budget Update

Dr. Kathleen Bodie again thanked the efforts of the Bridge the Gap committee who raised over a half a million dollars in a short period of time for the Arlington Public Schools. Dr. Bodie said personnel did receive letters notifying them of the reduction / elimination of their jobs. With the federal government and state government budget not having been finalized yet, Dr. Bodie suggested to defer the School Committee voting back the budget allocations the committee prioritized last week until Dr. Bodie is more certain of the impact to Arlington Public Schools would be.

Mr. Curran moved that no vote be take and delay voting allocations until we hear from the Superintendent / Chair on a Special Meeting, seconded by Ms. Heigham.
Voted: 6-0

Point of Order - Ms. Heigham asked if Mr. Curran wanted the meeting date certain or not. Mr. Curran replied no date certain.

Public Hearing – Policy JFBB - School Choice

Mr. Curro called a Public Hearing on Policy JFBB- School Choice at 10:34 p.m.

No public present.

Mr. Curro closed the Public Hearing of Policy JFBB – School Choice at 10:35 p.m.

After Dr. Bodie recommended voting No, the following motion was made:

Mr. Curran moved to follow our policy JFBB- School Choice and not admit non-resident students to Arlington Public Schools, seconded by Ms. Heigham.
Vote: 6-0

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Bodie said the donor who initially donated \$10,000 to begin a Mandarin Chinese program at the high school has donated an additional \$5,000, which will be used to support the program with materials and salary support.

Ms. Heigham moved the School Committee accepts with gratitude an additional \$5,000 to support the

**Mandarin Chinese program at the high school for the 2010-2011 school year, seconded by Ms. Starks.
Voted: 6-0**

Mr. Ryder reported the restructuring of the Special Education department and said all job positions are cost neutral and will benefit K-5 and 6-12 students.

The Last Day of School is June 23, 2010 with a 1:00 p.m. dismissal for all schools.

Dr. Bodie is waiting for the waiver process to be completed to announce the Interim Principal at the Bishop Elementary School.

The Math Expo was held on June 12, 2010, the annual Dollars for Scholars Program – The John J. Bilafer Citizens Scholarship presentation of scholarship awards was held on June 17 at Town Hall. The award ceremony for the Teach of the Year was held on June 11 for Semi Finalist Teacher of the year Cheryl Christo.

Secretary's Report, given by Cindy Starks:

- note from LeiLanie D'Agostino about being honored at the Staff Recognition although she could not make it
- emails on the increase in athletic fees from several parents as well as the captain of the cross country team
- email from the Girls Varsity Basketball coach opposed to the fee increases for FY 11
- email request to reinstate elementary ACE
- email concerning crossing guards and the bridge the gap fund
- copy of a letter from superintendent Bodie to the Parks & Recreation department about off leash dog hours
- invitations to attend moving up ceremonies for all 7 elementary schools and the Ottoson Middle School
- draft minutes of the May 25, 2010 and June 8, 2010 regular meetings of the SC
- letter to William Shea affirming his re-appointment to the Arlington Human Rights Commission
- letter from Jeff Thielman to Chair Joe Curro about stepping down from the Legal Services subcommittee
- memo from Chair Joe Curro about changes to subcommittee appointments
- copy of the letter from Superintendent Bodie to members of the parks & recreation committee about off leash dog hours
- copy of a letter from Superintendent Bodie to the director of capital planning at the Mass. School building authority about our vote taken to redistrict more students into Thompson
- copy dated June 11, 2010 of the non-retainer legal expenses of the APS
- email requests for information on funding for athletics and for some 2008 email correspondence~
- copy of the program from the John A. Bilafer Arlington Citizens Scholarship Foundation Dollars for Scholars awards presentation ceremony held on Thursday, June 17, 2010 at Town Hall
- copy of the program from the graduation exercise for the class of 2010 from AHS held on Sunday, June 13, 2010
- flyer from the Coale Education Group on renewal coaching for leaders in transition
- copies of the approved minutes from the regular SC meetings held on April 13, 2010, April 27, 2010, and May 11, 2010
- letter from the suburban coalition asking us to join their membership
- the MASC bulletin dated June 2010
- copy of a letter to superintendent Bodie about how Arlington has been given a status of level 1 for special education, which means we meet requirements
- June 21, 2010 copy of the Brackett School Newsletter
- copy of the program from the 7th annual focus on mathematics exposition held on June 12, 2010
- copy of a letter sent to Ottoson parents regarding a breach of confidentiality that has since been rectified
- Spring 2010 copy of the Calliope - a literary magazine presented by the elementary students of the Arlington public schools
- copy of the minutes of the policies and procedures subcommittee from May 25, 2010

Consent Agenda

Consent Agenda all items listed with an asterisk (*) are considered to be routine and will be enacted by one motion.

There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a member of the committee so request, in which event the item will be considered in its normal sequence.

*Approval of Warrant # 10173 Total Warrant Amount \$428,261.67 dated June 8, 2010

*Minutes for Approval: May 25, 2010

*Approval of Superintendent/School Committee/Administration Retreat Monday, August 2, 2010 2 – 6 p.m.

*Approval of School Committee summer meeting, Tuesday, August 3, 2010 TBD.

*Approval of Job Description – Food Service Program Assistant/Site Coordinator

*Human Rights Commission Appointments: Reappointment of Mr. Nick Minton

Ms. Heigham moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented, seconded by Mr. Curran.

Voted: 6-0

Mr. Curran moved the 11 o'clock rule to 11:10 seconded by Ms. Heigham.

Voted: 6-0

Roundtable

Mr. Pierce included the approved minutes from previous Policy and Procedures meetings and will review Policy Sections J, K, and L of the Policy Manual in 2010 – 2011. Mr. Pierce attended the Thompson School graduation.

Dr. Amp attended Arlington High School Graduation.

Mr. Curran said he and others are in beginning to enlist Arlington Public School Alumni to help raise funds for the Arlington Athletics.

Ms. Starks attended the Staff Recognition Day, helped to set up the Last Blast and attended the OPAC meeting.

Ms. Heigham attended Arlington High School Graduation, and the last Budget Subcommittee meeting discussions were on Chart of Accounts.

Mr. Curro presented the Ida Robbins award at Senior Awards night, attended Staff Recognition Day and the Town Government Reorganization meeting and Multi Year planning group and the Hardy Colonial Day.

Mr. Curro had requested the support of the School Committee members on the following changes to the subcommittee and other assignments, as follows:

Ms. Heigham moved that the following changes to subcommittee and other assignments are as follows:

- **Legal Services Review Subcommittee: Dr. Allison-Ampe (replacing Mr. Thielman)**
- **AAA Negotiations Team: Mr. Pierce (replacing Mr. Curro)**
- **AEA Unit C Negotiations Team: Mr. Pierce (replacing Ms. Heigham)**

seconded by Mr. Curran.

Voted: 6-0

Ms. Heigham moved that the Legal Services review Subcommittee is authorized and directed to research legal services arrangements of other school districts, investigate and solicit proposals for such services, and report back to the full School Committee on all findings no later than September 14, 2010; provided that existing legal representation shall continue uninterrupted during this period on a non-retainer basis at current hourly rates, seconded by Ms. Starks.

Voted: 6-0

Executive Session (collective bargaining union and non-union)
Contract Negotiations -

Mr. Curran moved to enter Executive Session at 11:08 p.m. to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting might have a detrimental effect, collective bargaining may also be conducted, to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel, to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel exit only for adjournment, seconded by Ms. Heigham.

Roll Call: Mr. Pierce yes, Dr. Ampe yes, Mr. Curran, Yes, Ms. Starks Yes, Ms. Heigham, Yes, and Mr. Curro Yes.

Voted: 6-0

Adjournment

Ms. Heigham voted to adjourn at 11:15 p.m. seconded by Mr. Curran.

Voted: 6-0

Respectfully submitted by
Karen M. Fitzgerald
Administrative Assistant
Arlington School Committee/cs